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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/010,391	12/07/2001	Nabil Enrique Salman	8384R	6122

27752 7590 03/30/2004

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EXAMINER

TRUONG, THANH K

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

3721

DATE MAILED: 03/30/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	10/010,391	SALMAN ET AL.	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	Thanh K Truong	3721	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 26 February 2004.
- 2a) This action is **FINAL**. 2b) This action is non-final.
- 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) Claim(s) 1,2,5-8,11,13-16 and 18 is/are pending in the application.
 - 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) Claim(s) 1, 2, 5-8, 11, 13-16 and 18 is/are rejected.
- 7) Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 - a) All b) Some * c) None of:
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)	4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)	Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.
3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08) Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____.	5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
	6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

1. This action is in response to applicant's amendment, received on February 26, 2004.
2. Applicant's cancellation of claims 3, 4, 9, 10, 12, 17, 19 and 20 is acknowledged.

Terminal Disclaimer

3. The terminal disclaimer filed on February 26, 2004 disclaiming the terminal portion of any patent granted on this application which would extend beyond the expiration date of any patent granted on Application number 09/745,702 has been reviewed and is accepted. The terminal disclaimer has been recorded.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

4. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

5. Claims 1, 2, 5-8, 11, 13-16 and 18 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Richards et al. (4,869,049) in view of Hamilton et al. (5,662,758).

Richards discloses an apparatus comprising: a body formed by an inner core having an inlet opening and an outlet opening and a passageway there between (figures 1, 4 & 5); a casing 1 comprising a surrounding casing wall, a storage space to retain a length of the flexible tubular sheet 2 within the storage space in a layered stack; the tubular sheet is gathered and closed at each end to form a closed packaged article 35 (figure 1); a means 61 comprises a slot for separating the closed packaged article;

and the cutting blade 64 (figure 6). Richards further discloses the article to be packaged is a waste-filled disposable absorbent article (column 2, lines 42-44);

Richards discloses the claimed invention, but does not expressively disclose that the tubular sheet comprises the adhesive material.

Hamilton discloses a flexible film having pressure sensitive adhesive protected from inadvertent adherence (abstract); the flexible film having a recessed pressure sensitive adhesive and collapsible protrusions (three-dimensional film) which serve as stand-off to prevent premature sticking to wide variety of rigid and resilient target surfaces, wherein the collapsible protrusions are small and closely spaced for releasable sealing of the composite material to such surfaces or even to itself (column 3, lines 20-26).

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art, at the time applicant's invention was made, to modify Richards' tubular sheet by applying the flexible film with adhesive as taught by Hamilton providing a flexible material having pressure sensitive adhesive that is protected from inadvertent adherence to other surfaces.

Regarding to claim 15, Richards discloses the claimed invention, but did not expressly disclose the device having a compact dimension as cited in claim 15. It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to make the device having a compact dimension (as cited in claim 15) providing consumers a portable, light weight device, since it has been held that where the general

conditions of a claim are disclosed in the prior art, discovering the optimum or workable ranges involves only routine skill in the art. *In re Aller*, 105 USPQ 233.

Response to Arguments

6. Applicant's arguments filed October 2, 2003 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive.

In response to the Applicant's argument that, in Richards' reference, the tubing is gathered via the twisting motion of the device as opposed to a slot, the examiner disagrees. Richards clearly discloses a slot of the cutting unit 61 for gathering and separating a packaged article from a trailing portion of the tubular sheet as the sheet is inserted and moved through the slot (column 4, lines 14-22). The fact that Richards discloses additional structure that is not required by the Applicant's invention is irrelevant.

Applicant argued that Hamilton's reference does not teach or suggest "a slot for gathering and separating ... as the tubular sheet is inserted and moved through the slot", and there is no motivation to combine the references.

Hamilton was relied up on for a flexible film having pressure sensitive adhesive protected from inadvertent adherence, and the film having a recessed pressure sensitive adhesive and collapsible protrusions which serve as stand-off to prevent premature sticking to wide variety of rigid and resilient target surfaces, wherein the collapsible protrusions are small and closely spaced for releasable sealing of the composite material to such surfaces or even to itself (column 3, lines 20-26).

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Richards teaches to seal the package by twisting the flexible bag (twisted closure 30); Richards also discloses that the twisted seal between the packages may become loosened, and suggests that the tubing made of high-density polyethylene may provide a better seal. Moreover, Richards' apparatus can employ varieties of flexible tubular sheet materials including the material disclosed by Hamilton. Therefore it would have been obvious to incorporate Hamilton's sealable tubular material into Richards' apparatus to provide a more effective twisted closure, and thus a better sealed package.

Conclusion

7. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.
8. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Thanh K Truong whose telephone number is (703) 605-0423. The examiner can normally be reached on Mon-Thurs from 8:00 AM to 6:30 PM.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Rinaldi I Rada can be reached on (703) 308-2187. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

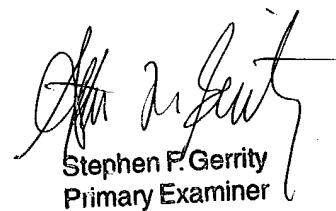
Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should

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you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

tkt

March 22, 2004.



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Stephen F. Gerrity".

Stephen F. Gerrity
Primary Examiner